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NEWS RELEASE

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R.I. Teacher Named as Finalist for 2004 National Teacher of the Year

Rhode Island's 2004 Teacher of the Year, Kathleen M. Mellor, who teaches English as a Second Language at the Davisville Middle School, in North Kingstown, has been chosen as one of four finalists for the 2004 National Teacher of the Year Award, the nation's top teaching honor.

The announcement was made today (Jan. 13) by G. Thomas Houlihan, executive director of the Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO), and Ernest Fleishman, Senior Vice President for Education for Scholastic, Inc. CCSSO and Scholastic sponsor the National Teacher of the Year Program.

In selecting Mellor as a finalist, they noted that "broad-based, community-wide, and informed support systems for schools are something Mrs. Mellor sees every day as vital to equal and in-depth education opportunities."

Mellor, who lives in South Kingstown, has been a teacher for 23 years, and in her current job since 1985.

If she is chosen as National Teacher of the Year, she will spend the next school year as a spokesperson for the teaching profession, addressing forums and meetings across the country and in other nations.

The other three finalists are teachers from Kansas, South Carolina, and Washington State.

A panel of educators from 14 national education organizations chose the finalists and will select the 2004 National Teacher of the Year. The winner is to be announced in April by President Bush.

